

## **IN THE CLAIMS**

1. (original): A process for the preparation of a compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$  which comprises:
  - a) reacting a compound of formula  $PX_3$  with a compound of formula  $HNR^2R^3$  to form a compound of formula  $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$ ; and
  - b) reacting the compound of formula  $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$  with a compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-H$  in the presence of a solvent to form the compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$ ;wherein  
 $R^1$  represents a phosphorus protecting group;  
 $R^2$  and  $R^3$  each independently represent an alkyl group, or  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  are joined, together with the N to which they are attached, to form a 5-7 membered ring;  
 $Y^1$  represents O or S; and  
X represents a halogen;  
characterised in that the solvent employed in reaction b) is a hydrocarbon solvent.
2. (original): A process according to claim 1, wherein the reaction between the compound of formula  $PX_3$  and the compound of formula  $HNR^2R^3$  in step a) takes place in the presence of the same solvent employed for the reaction between the compound of formula  $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$  and the compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-H$  in step b).
3. (original): A process according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein  $R^1$  represents a methyl group, a group of formula  $-CH_2CH_2-Si(CH_3)_2C_6H_5$ ,  $-CH_2CH_2-S(O)_2-CH_2CH_3$  or  $-CH_2CH_2-C_6H_4-NO_2$ , a group of formula  $-CH_2CH_2CN$ , or a phenyl, 4-chlorophenyl, 2-chlorophenyl, 2-nitrophenyl or 4-nitrophenyl group.
4. (original): A process according to claim 3, wherein  $R^1$  represents a group of formula  $-CH_2CH_2CN$  and  $Y^1$  represents O.
5. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  each independently represent a  $C_{1-6}$  alkyl group.
6. (original): A process according to claim 5, wherein  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  represent isopropyl groups.

7. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein  $Y^1$  represents O.

8. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein X represents Cl.

9. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein the hydrocarbon solvent is toluene.

10. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein the reaction between the compound of formula  $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$  and the compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-H$  in step b) takes place in the presence of a base.

11. (original): A process according to claim 10, wherein the base is a tri( $C_{1-4}$ alkyl)amine.

12. (original): A process for the preparation of  $\{[(CH_3)_2CH]_2N\}_2P-O-CH_2CH_2CN$ , which comprises

a) reacting  $PCl_3$  with  $[(CH_3)_2CH]_2N-H$  in toluene to form  $\{[(CH_3)_2CH]_2N\}_2P-Cl$ ; and

b) reacting  $\{[(CH_3)_2CH]_2N\}_2P-Cl$  with  $HO-CH_2CH_2CN$  in toluene to form  $\{[(CH_3)_2CH]_2N\}_2P-O-CH_2CH_2CN$ .

13. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 or claim 12, wherein substantially anhydrous reaction conditions are employed.

14. (original): A process for the preparation of a compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$  which comprises reacting a compound of formula  $X-P(NR^2R^3)_2$  with a compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-H$  in the presence of a solvent to form the compound of formula  $R^1-Y^1-P(NR^2R^3)_2$

wherein

$R^1$  represents a phosphorus protecting group;

$R^2$  and  $R^3$  each independently represent an alkyl group, or  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  are joined, together with the N to which they are attached, to form a 5-7 membered ring;

$Y^1$  represents O or S; and

X represents a halogen;  
characterised in that the solvent is a hydrocarbon solvent.

15. (original): A process according to claim 14, wherein  $R^1$  represents  $NCCH_2CH_2-$ ;  $Y^1$  represents O;  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  are each isopropyl, X is chloro, and the hydrocarbon solvent is toluene.